

**White-tailed Black Cockatoo Nesting Behaviour.**—On July 4, 1963, while visiting the Lake Magenta Reserve with the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee I noticed isolated pairs of cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus baudini*) examining nesting hollows in salmon gums. In each case they were found in odd pockets of these gums in what was mainly mallee-scrub country vegetation. One pair was at Sullivans Soak and the other at Reedy's Dam. During the same period we saw a flock of 30 flying low over low scrub country, and another flock of three birds—probably a family party—over similar country. On the way back west of Marradong we saw a flock of some 80 birds in a paddock beside the road. The above would appear to indicate that breeding pairs tend to select isolated areas to nest.

—ANGUS ROBINSON, Coolup.

**Nesting of the Red-tailed Tropic-bird near Cape Naturaliste.**—Hitherto the southernmost known nesting record of the Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*) was from an unfrequented beach at Busselton in November 1939. However, during late October or early November 1963 Mr. C. Knott, of Boyanup, found a nesting pair about one mile south of Cape Naturaliste, near Sugarloaf Rock. One of the birds was dead and the other flew off leaving the egg. This was of a greyish-white ground colour, heavily marked all over with grey-brown streakings. It measured 61.9 x 46.2 mm. Mr. Knott said the dead bird showed no sign of injury and he thought it might have died from exhaustion as there had been severe storms during the previous few days. The egg was on the mainland under a rocky ledge. Circling around the Sugarloaf Rock there were three more Tropic-birds and it is possible they were nesting on the island. This Rock is about 150 ft. above sea-level and about 100 ft. in diameter. It was the first time he had seen any Tropic-birds in the area.

It is probably this dead bird whose remains were later collected by Lyall McHugh (*W. Aust. Nat.*, 9: 120), and the immature bird picked up near Collie, reported by H. B. Shugg (*ibid.*) may have originated from this or some nearby nesting station.

—V. N. SERVENTY, Wembley Downs.

**Some Snakes New for Western Australia.**—Over the last two years the following four species of snake have been collected for the first time in this State. All of them are figured in Kinghorn's *Snakes of Australia*.

*Typhlops ligatus* Peters. Previously known from eastern Australia. One of these blind-snakes was collected recently by Mr. K. T. Richards at the Kimberley Research Station (Ord River).

*Typhlops endoterus* Waite. Previously known from Hermannsburg, Northern Territory. That it extends into adjacent parts of this State was abundantly demonstrated by Mr. Mark de Graaf who sent to the Museum six specimens from Warburton Range and another from 70 miles south.

*Acrochordus granulatus* (Schneider). The File Snake occurs in coastal and estuarine waters from India to the Northern Territory

and New Guinea. In April this year Dr. I. H. Steward collected one in the estuary of the King Edward River (north Kimberley). The snake was captured at high tide on a moonless night, several hundred yards from the mangrove-lined shore.

*Denisonia mastersi* (Krefft) of south-eastern Australia was first collected in this State in January 1963, when Mr. A. M. Douglas found one under rubbish near the long-abandoned telegraph station at Euela. It has since been found near Coeklebiddy, 160 miles further west.

—G. M. STORR, W.A. Museum.

**An Early Occurrence of the Kelp Gull in South-Western Australia.**—While working through the bird collection at the Western Australian Museum, I was momentarily puzzled with the identity of a juvenile-plumaged gull (No. A2701) collected at Claremont on August 22, 1924, labelled *Gabianus* (= *Larus*) *pacificus*, but which had a bill too small for this species. That it was in fact a Kelp or Dominican Gull, *L. dominicanus*, soon became obvious. The specimen was later forwarded to Mr. F. C. Kinsky of the Dominion Museum, Wellington, New Zealand, who substantiated the identification and remarked (*in litt.*) that the specimen is a first-year bird which was collected only about six months after reaching the flying stage.

The particulars of the specimen are: female; exposed culmen length, 45 mm.; culmen depth at base, 18.5; culmen depth at angle of gonys, 19; tarsus, 66; right wing, 411; left wing, 416; tail, 165. Predominate'y brown mottled plumage with no conspicuous diagnostic markings on wings and tail. No primaries nor rectrices missing.

Kinsky (*Rec. Dominion Mus.*, 4 (14), 1963: 161) has shown that although the dimensions of New Zealand and sub-antarctic birds overlap, the latter tend to be smaller than those from the more temperate regions, the differences being particularly evident in the bill and wing. The measurements of the specimen coincide with the upper limit measurements of first year females of the New Zealand population as given by Kinsky, and do not lie within the range of those of the sub-antarctic islands to the south-west of the State. Apparently, therefore, the individual originated from New Zealand rather than from the South Indian Ocean region which was first suspected on the basis of the bird having been collected near Perth.

The Kelp Gull was recently observed at Albany, and at Boulanger Island, Jurien Bay (*J. Ford, W. Aust. Nat.*, 9, 1964: 86).

—JULIAN FORD, Perth.

**The Black-throated Whiplbird near Gnowangerup.**—A few miles east of Gnowangerup an unsealed road leaves the main Gnowangerup-Ongerup highway and runs practically due east. Where it reaches the summit of a slight rise in typical sandplain country Dean Fisher, Fred Johnston and myself, while on our way to the Albany Field-Outing of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union on October 26,